

Year's Best Movie Rattles Skeletons

'Sunset Boulevard' a Dramatic Film Of Hollywood's Haunted Past

By Jay Carmody

Sunset boulevard is a mere upstart among the renowned streets of the world's great cities. Moreover, its contribution to the history of mankind has been on the sunny side. It would be ill at ease in the company of Pennsylvania avenue, the Quai d'Orsay, Champs Elysee or even Broadway.

Yet in spite of its reputation, Sunset boulevard is a thoroughfare one cannot forget once having discovered it.

It has a pretty name as street names go. The words suggest, and not inaccurately, that this is the street down which the sun goes daily as it leaves the continent. It is not a bad poetic image. Despite the new, rich accent in its appearance, Sunset boulevard is not unattractive. Not all of its architecture is huge, bizarre and in bad taste. Much of it is simple and innocent and built close to the ground as if a great many residents mistrusted, shhh! an e-a-r-r-t-h-q-u-a-k-e.

Sunset boulevard is a street whose geography is not dull and flat. Running westward to the ocean from Los Angeles, it twists and undulates through and over pleasant hills.

This is the physical Sunset boulevard and quite different from the symbolic one pictured in "Sunset Boulevard," the season's most dramatic movie now on display at the Warner. Nevertheless, despite the distinction between the two, Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder could not have found a more apt title for their picture. Whatever its innocence of appearance, Sunset boulevard is the address of the past that haunts the movie industry and the one so dramatically illustrated in the Paramount production.

The boulevard's closets have been emptied of their skeletons in the film which is expected to make a sweep of the year's movie prizes.

These are blended in the character of the demented, passe movie queen, Norma Desmond, played with such searching skill by Gloria Swanson. This is a fabulous woman. Against almost any other background except the Hollywood past, she would be unbelievable. In this frame, she is completely credible.

The early movie industry with its fantastic success could have taken such a nonentity as Norma and turned her into such a dramatic ruin. It could have brought her a fame whose ultimate loss could only damage her to the degree pictured by Brackett and Wilder spares Norma nothing. It is a pitiless X-ray of the weird and ironically comic way of life which went on in Hollywood's earlier day along its most colorful thoroughfare.

Earlier movies have dealt with small segments of this maniacal myth. Not all of them together, however, have summed up with such eloquence how it is in the haunted houses and the ghostly lives of those who survive Hollywood's flaming adolescence.

Unless some absolute masterpiece comes along, "Sunset Boulevard" probably will merit every one of its prizes.

Another Movie Musical Team Is in Order

The years slip away rapidly in a time of turmoil and there have been many of them since the great musical teams of Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. The money these made for film producers is one of the vivid memories of Hollywood and it would like nothing better than to see its like again.

There is a possibility that it very well will. At least the most pleasant suggestion of the current musical, "Summer Stock," is that Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer should keep right on with movies co-starring Judy Garland and Gene Kelly. These are extremely talented humans, jointly possessed of a charm that equals that of Rogers and Astaire in their heyday.

It need not be an exclusive arrangement, of course, but by the time the earnings are counted up in the case of "Summer Stock," at least one Garland-Kelly picture per year is suggested. Such pictures make such pleasant entertainment.

They Keep on Making Adaptations

Washington has missed out on a number of these musical adaptations of old plays during its drama famine of the last two years. It will begin to catch up, however, when "The Barrier" has its premiere at the Gayety on September 25.

The musical starring Muriel Rahn and Lawrence Tibbett is an adaptation of Langston Hughes' old Broadway triumph, "The Mulatto." Hughes, America's foremost Negro poet, has done the libretto of "The Barrier" for which Han Meyerowitz has written the music.

The musical which will play two weeks at the Gayety prior to its bow on Broadway is the season's major production of Michale Myerberg whose last offering here was "Lute Song." The latter was purchased by Myerberg after it was given a highly dramatic production, the first on any American stage, at Catholic University.

Margaret O'Brien Tackles The Jinx of Adolescence

By Jack Quigg

HOLLYWOOD.

Margaret O'Brien, once the pitted princess of movieland, is attempting the perilous climb to adult stardom. Her path is lined by ghosts of talented tots who fell along the way.

The "awkward age"—adolescence—is a pitfall few child stars span.

Miss O'Brien is now completing "The Romantic Age," her first film in a year, her first without pigtails and her first since splitting with MGM, the studio where she grew up and which considered her charm worth \$3,000 every Friday.

Many who have seen her taking her first crack at portraying adult emotion believe she has a good chance of beating the "in-between age" jinx.

She Charleslons.

If the brown-eyed lass lasts, she'll join at the top such ex-child stars as Shirley Temple, Mickey Rooney, Diana Lynn and Judy Garland. Best-known victims of the jinx: Deanna Durbin, Jane Withers, Freddie Bartholomew and the Jackies, Cogan and Cooper.

Five talk, teen-age romances and kicking the Charleston in an off-the-shoulder gown is apparently as effortless for the Margaret of 13 as flashing a shy smile was for the winsome Margaret of 5.

In her case "awkward" is a misnomer. Now a graceful 5 foot 1, she's lost the angular lines of childhood and acquired curves of young womanhood.

Perhaps this painless blossoming is why she and her mother changed their minds.

Summer Stage

ARENA STAGE—"Of Mice and Men," with Dorothea Jackson, starting Monday. CROSSROADS—"Personal Appearance," with Grace Pearson, starting Monday. OLNEY—"Dear Brutus," with Brian Aherne, starting Tuesday. SESQUI AMPHITHEATER—"Faith of Our Fathers," with Lawrence Ryle, nightly except Monday.

WEDNESDAY Sept. 13th RKO KEITH'S

"SO YOUNG, SO BAD"
starring PAUL HENREID
with CATHERINE McLEOD - GRACE COPPIN
CECIL CLOVELLY Released thru United Artists

Broadway's Shortage Is Comics

By Mark Barron

NEW YORK.

In viewing the new shows which are to come to Broadway within the next several months, it is shocking to note that there is a scarcity of comedians.

Ordinarily you can accept such a musical revue as "Pardon Our French," which is due to open early in October, and which you are sure will be another "Hello, Poppin'." And, on paper, it probably will be another show that will be hilariously funny and a hit because the remarkable Olsen and Johnson will be playing the leading roles.

Like Joe Cook and Ed Wynn, these two comedians need no book, score or even a trapeze.

In "Pardon My French" they are appearing in a continental revue which presents mostly vaudeville acts from Paris, Brussels, London, Rome and Madrid stages. You can imagine what will happen when the ebullient Olsen and Johnson finish with their introductions of this cosmopolitan melange of artists.

Not Many Others.

But, Olsen and Johnson will still be the only comedians, and the other shows coming up do not promise much in the way of funny men who are as well established as these two.

In the musical comedy, "Out of This World," a Cole Porter lyrical piece based on the Greek "Amphitryon," there are a couple of comic parts for David Burns and Charlotte Greenwood. But neither one is devastating in promoting laughs.

An exception, perhaps, will be the arrival of the musical comedy, "Call Me Madam," which is due to arrive at the Imperial Theater in about four weeks. With a story by Russell Crouse and Howard Lindsay and music by Irving Berlin, this comedy about a woman diplomat is getting more advance call at the box office than any show since "South Pacific."

Ethel Is Dependable.

The story, it is generally admitted, is suggested by Mrs. Perle Mesta, the United States Minister to Luxembourg. One of the top songs in the show is an Irving Berlin number called "The Hostess With the Mostest on the Ball." The idea was suggested by Berlin learning of Mrs. Mesta's enthusiasm for giving extraordinary balls and other parties.

Miss Berman, you may be sure will sing the role with exuberance and enthusiasm, and she will get some laughs between scales for she is an excellent comedienne. But, the Broadway stage needs more comedies and it needs more comedienne like Ethel Merman. There are now too few who can inspire a laugh when laughs are needed.

Faith Beats Lisp

By the Associated Press

HOLLYWOOD. The lowly toothpick was Faith Domergue's key to a movie career. As a child, she lisped. When Howard Hughes signed her to a movie contract in 1941 she still lisped. Get rid of it, he ordered. The actress says she did it this way:

"First I tried Demosthenes' method of placing pebbles in my mouth and talking. That helped, but I found that a toothpick, placed behind the eye teeth, was better. I practiced delivering dramatic readings for an entire year with a toothpick (not the same one) between my lips."

STUDY IN PREJUDICE—And dramatically the harshest of the screen plays dealing with the race question is "No Way Out," which opens Wednesday at the Playhouse. In the scenes above are the four key players, Richard Widmark, Linda Darnell, Sidney Poitier and Stephen McNally. Widmark plays the pathological Negro hater, and Poitier the young doctor who is the object of his vengeance.

A Good Skate Makes Good

Vera Ralston, Here to Stay, Becomes Thoroughly American

By Sheila Graham

HOLLYWOOD.

Vera Ralston is wearing a strapless black dress with pale blue taffeta playing peekaboo all over the brief top and the voluminous skirt. On her wrist is an aquamarine the size of a chicken's egg—a large chicken's egg. "It matches my petticoat," says Vera, lifting her skirt slightly.

We are lunching at my favorite rendezvous in Beverly Hills run and owned by "Prince" Mike Romanoff, and it's the first time I've had a chance for a long talk with Vera. Usually we catch-as-catch-can on the Republic lot where Vera is the bright feminine star in a studio that is more famous for its famous Western stars like Roy Rogers, John Wayne, etc.

"I came to this country 11 years ago," Vera tells me. "I was an ice skater in Europe." She was an Olympic champion and once snubbed a certain Adolf Hitler when he commanded she be presented to him. Vera refused the honor.

"My mother and I had \$30 between us when we came to this country after Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia. We took the last plane out of Prague. We're hoping to go back soon and visit my aunt who is ill. "Can you get in?" I ask Vera. "Yes, but I don't know yet how you get out," she replies. She is an American citizen but I somehow think her studio bosses will forbid the trip.

"I was there two years ago and had so much trouble leaving the country—so much red tape! And Vera means "Red" with a capital "R."

But No Fortune.

"Why don't you skate these days?" I want to know. "In the old days," replies the attractive star, "I skate and if I break my leg, my father is well-to-do and he can pay the bills. Now I must pay. I first skated in this country at the Madison Square Garden in 1947. I met Jimmie Johnston and he talked me into being a pro. He said I'd make a fortune. Well, I made good money, but not a fortune. I played carnivals and skated in the intermission at hockey games." Vera was known then as Gruba—she changed to Ralston after signing for a picture career.

"I went back home to get married, but Hitler was two steps ahead of me. He took Austria so I came back. My fiancé was sent to a concentration camp and I never heard of him again. My father stayed in Prague. They put him in a concentration camp and knocked all his teeth out." When the war and the suffering was over, Vera's father came to live with her and his wife in California. "But the 10 years apart had changed them; and recently the father went back; the mother remained to live with Vera."

A Four-Year Citizen.

Vera has been a citizen four years. "Thank God," adds Vera. And she is now as American as they come. "I love blue jeans. I love to work with cement."



VERA RALSTON
Is one glamour girl who boasts first of her knowledge of cement-mixing.

rents a cement mixer for \$3 a day and paves her own walks. "First day I didn't know about cement, my hands peeled. By the time I built a wall, I knew all about cement." "Is that how your nail came off?" I ask. "No, that I left in the car door. I wear a false when I work," she said, meaning a false nail.

Vera and her mother believe in seeing America first. "We've crossed this country four times." Next time they plan to go in a truck. When Vera asked her mother what she wanted most, she replied: "A truck for traveling." "When we drive, I wear blue jeans which I love. I don't bother to do my hair. I am myself, which I love—no lipstick—no one recognizes me. Once in New Mexico

Today's Schedules

AMABASSADOR — "Sunset Boulevard": 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25 and 9:35 p.m.
CAPITOL — "Summer Stock": 2, 4:40, 7:20 and 10 p.m.
Stage shows: 1:15, 3:55, 6:35 and 9:15 p.m.
COLUMBIA — "Shakedown": 1:30, 5:40, 7:45 and 9:50 p.m.
DUPONT — "The Third Man": 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:35 and 9:40 p.m.
KEITH'S — "Louisa": 1, 3:10, 5:15, 7:25 and 9:35 p.m.
LITTLE — "Bambi": 1:25, 3:05, 4:45, 6:30, 8:15 and 10 p.m.
METROPOLITAN — "Tea for Two": 1:25, 3:30, 5:35, 7:40 and 9:45 p.m.
NATIONAL — "Three Little Words": 1, 2:45, 4:35, 6:20, 8:10 and 10 p.m.
PALACE — "The Black Rose": 1:50, 4:30, 7:05 and 9:45 p.m.
PLAZA — "Pagliacci": 1:20, 3, 4:40, 6:25, 8:05, 9:45 and 11 p.m.
TRANS-LUX — "Destination Moon": 1, 2:45, 4:30, 6:15, 8:05 and 9:55 p.m.
WARNER — "Sunset Boulevard": 1:10, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20 and 9:35 p.m.

Vivien Now Would Try A Musical

By the Associated Press

HOLLYWOOD.

Having conquered just about every other form of film and stage work, Vivien Leigh has a yen to tackle a musical.

Sounds incongruous, huh? Well, it's true. The famed actress dropped the hint on the set of "A Streetcar Named Desire." She said all she needed was an offer and enough time for preparation.

"When I was studying for the theater, I took ballet as one of my courses," she said. "I fancy myself as a not-too-bad ballroom dancer. I know nothing about tap. But I'm sure I can learn."

"Also, I have sung on the stage in plays with music and audiences weren't hostile in their reception. In fact, the reaction was most cordial."

Coming Attractions

AMABASSADOR — "Petty Girl," with Joan Caulfield.
CAPITOL — "Abbott and Costello in the Foreign Legion," with Bud Abbott and Lou Costello.
COLUMBIA — "The Black Rose," with Tyrone Power, starting Thursday.
DUPONT — "Farewell to Yesterday," with Paul Henreid, starting Friday.
KEITH'S — "So Young, So Bad," with Paul Henreid, starting Wednesday.
LITTLE — "Walt Disney's Cinderella," starting Friday.
METROPOLITAN — "Cariboo Trail," with Randolph Scott, starting Thursday.
NATIONAL — "Kind Hearts and Coronets," with Alec Guinness, starting Sunday.
PALACE — "Fanny Pants," with Bob Hope, starting Thursday.
PLAYHOUSE — "No Way Out," with Linda Darnell, starting Wednesday.
PLAZA — "Madness of Love," with Aurora Bautista, starting Tuesday.
WARNER — "Petty Girl," with Joan Caulfield.

Youth Aid

By the Associated Press

HOLLYWOOD.

A youngster's ambitions should be encouraged, Alan Mowbray believes.

As evidence of his sincerity Mowbray tells, straight-faced, this tale. His 15-year-old son Alan II once came to him and declared his intention of becoming a writer. "That's a laudable goal," Mowbray told the lad, patting his back. "Here's a pencil."

Today's Schedules

AMABASSADOR — "Sunset Boulevard": 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25 and 9:35 p.m.
CAPITOL — "Summer Stock": 2, 4:40, 7:20 and 10 p.m.
Stage shows: 1:15, 3:55, 6:35 and 9:15 p.m.
COLUMBIA — "Shakedown": 1:30, 5:40, 7:45 and 9:50 p.m.
DUPONT — "The Third Man": 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:35 and 9:40 p.m.
KEITH'S — "Louisa": 1, 3:10, 5:15, 7:25 and 9:35 p.m.
LITTLE — "Bambi": 1:25, 3:05, 4:45, 6:30, 8:15 and 10 p.m.
METROPOLITAN — "Tea for Two": 1:25, 3:30, 5:35, 7:40 and 9:45 p.m.
NATIONAL — "Three Little Words": 1, 2:45, 4:35, 6:20, 8:10 and 10 p.m.
PALACE — "The Black Rose": 1:50, 4:30, 7:05 and 9:45 p.m.
PLAZA — "Pagliacci": 1:20, 3, 4:40, 6:25, 8:05, 9:45 and 11 p.m.
TRANS-LUX — "Destination Moon": 1, 2:45, 4:30, 6:15, 8:05 and 9:55 p.m.
WARNER — "Sunset Boulevard": 1:10, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20 and 9:35 p.m.

Actor Woes Even Bother Mr. Disney

By Bob Thomas

HOLLYWOOD.

Alfred Hitchcock, the director who has called actors anything from children to cattle, once remarked that Walt Disney has the ideal relationship with his stars: He can erase them if they get out of line.

When I told Disney this, he replied: "We have trouble with our actors, too."

Not Really Funny.

For instance, there is Mickey Mouse. The famed rodent has been brought back more times than Sarah Bernhardt. Several times Mickey has faded and his sentimental creator has revived him in a new vehicle.

"The trouble is," Disney explained, "that Mickey isn't funny himself. He has to be surrounded with comic situations. That takes a lot of trouble."

Minnie Mouse has suffered an eclipse for the same reason. "There's no action connected with Minnie," the cartoonist said, "and we have given up the subtle stuff."

New Problems.

Disney has taken on a new set of actors who are even more unmanageable than his film veterans. He has started a series which he calls "True-Life Adventures," starring the wild life of North America.

The first of the series was called "Seal Island" and it chronicled the life of seals on an Aleutian Island. It won an Academy Award. The second is "Beaver Valley," which is currently winning much praise throughout the country. Among the fan letters Disney has received is one from a justice of the United States Supreme Court.

"Beaver Valley," as you might suspect, stars the beaver. "He is a fantastic animal," Walt said. "All he does is eat, sleep and work. He never seems to play at all. The work he does is of utmost importance in conserving the land in the Western United States. The Government even transports beavers into areas that need conservation."

LAST 5 DAYS

OLNEY THEATRE 1335 CONN AVE

Open Tues. Sept. 12, thru Sun. Sept. 17
Richard Widmark & Evelyn Freeman
PRESENT

BRIAN AHERNE

IN BRIAN'S ROMANTIC COMEDY
"DEAR BRUTUS"

HELEN CARROLL, HARRY ELLERRE
MATS., 2:40 Sat. Sun.
EVEN., 8:10 except Mon.
Tickets JORDAN'S, 15th & G. St. NE. 1318

THE RD MAN

at OLNEY
dupont 1335 CONN AVE
DUponT 7302

WALT DISNEY Festival

"BAMBI"

LITTLE 1st St. SE 1256

NOW ROOL

RKO KEITH'S

OPEN 10:45 A.M. SUN. 12:30 P.M.

Laughs Galore in

THE COMEDY

HIT OF 1950.

Louisa

Reagan - Charles Coburn - Bob Hussey

Edmond Gwynn - Spring Byington

NATIONAL
A WONDERFUL MUSICAL
with M-G-M
of course!
Fred Astaire - Skeeter
"THREE LITTLE WORDS"
TECHNICOLOR

NEW GAYETY
NA. 1586
1587
ONE WEEK ONLY BEG. SEPT. 18
BOX OFFICE OPENS
MON., SEPT. 11th-10 A.M.
RICHARD W. KRAKEUR and FRED F. FINKLEHOFF
present
CELESTE HOLM
"Affairs of State"
a new comedy by LOUIS VERNEUIL
with REGINALD OWEN, BARBARA O'NEIL and STROUDWICK
Starring by PAUL MORISON - Costumes by DOROTHY JAKIN
Prices (Inc. Tax) Eve. Orch. \$2.40; Bal. \$2.50, \$2.00, \$1.50, 2nd Bal. \$1.20
Sat. Mat. Orch. \$2.40; Bal. \$1.50, \$1.20, 2nd Bal. \$1.20
Sat. Mat. Orch. \$2.00; Bal. \$1.50, \$1.20, 2nd Bal. \$1.20
MAIL ORDERS NOW. Kinetic Envelope Self-Addressed, Stamped Envelope.

COMING! 2 WEEKS BEG. TUES. EVE.
"A powerful stage work... raw, compelling theatre."
— NEW YORK TIMES
MICHAEL MYERBERG and JOEL SPECTOR
present
LAWRENCE TIBBETT • MURIEL RAHN
in a New Musical Drama
The Barrier
Book & Lyrics by LANGSTON HUGHES
Music by JAN MEYEROWITZ
Choreography by CHARLES WEIDMAN and DORIS HUMPHREY
Scenery designed by H. A. Condeli
MAIL ORDERS NOW
Prices (Inc. Tax) Eve. Orch. \$2.40; Bal. \$2.50, \$2.00, \$1.50, 2nd Bal. \$1.20
Wed. & Sat. Mat. Orch. \$2.00; Bal. \$1.50, \$1.20, 2nd Bal. \$1.20
Kinetic stamped & self-addressed envelope with order.

LAST 3 DAYS

PANIC IN THE STREETS
AIR-CONDITIONED
THE PLAYHOUSE
15th & H STREETS - SE 9200

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
Eugene Ormandy
Conductor
Season 1950-1951
Seven Concerts
A Few Series Available
NO MAIL ORDERS
Snow Concert Bureau
1108 G St. N.W.
(In Campbell Music Co.)
Hours 10:00-5:30
REpublic 4433

Upside down
traveling at
seven miles
a second
DESTINATION MOON
Color by TECHNICOLOR
PRODUCED BY GEORGE PAL DIRECTED BY IRVING PICHSEL
AIR-CONDITIONED OPEN 1:00 P.M.
Trans-Lux

4th Record Week

CAPITOL
TODAY Open 12:45
THAT SHINY, SWINY GENE KELLY
JUDY GARLAND GENE KELLY
'SUMMER STOCK'
Technicolor
State
ARTIE DANN
Headling a Big Show
THURSDAY
ABBOTT & COSTELLO
in
'THE FOREIGN LEGION'
On Stage
JAYNE & ADAM DIBATANO
JOHNNY MORRIS
PALACE
TODAY open 12:30
THE HORDES OF KUBLAI KHAN
ARE ON THE MARCH!
The Black Rose
TECHNICOLOR
From Oscar
POWER • WELLES Circle AUBRY
NEXT ATTRACTION
BOB HOPE
LUCILLE BALL
'FANCY PANTS'
TECHNICOLOR
COLUMBIA
TODAY open 12:45
'SHAKEDOWN'
HOWARD DUFF • BRIAN DONLEVY
PEERY DOW